THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • FRIDAY • AUGUST 11, 2023 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 42 • LATE CITY EDITION

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

RBI KEEPS INTEREST RATES UNCHANGED

The RBI on Thursday left its key interest rates unchanged for a third straight meeting, but signalled tighter policy if food prices continue to drive inflation higher. The monetary policy committee held the benchmark repurchase rate at 6.50% in a unanimous decision. It retained the stance on "withdrawal of accommodation" but Governor Shaktikanta Das sounded hawkish when he highlighted that headline inflation needs to subside sustainably below 4% | **P15**

● DEFEATS NO-TRUST MOTION BY VOICE VOTE ● SAYS NDA WILL WIN 2024 POLLS ● CALLS OPPN'S ALLIANCE 'GHAMANDIA'

Country is with Manipur, peace will prevail: Modi

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

WITH barely eight months to go for the general elections, the Modi government on Thursday defeated by voice vote a no-trust motion after three days of debate in the Lok Sabha amid Opposition walkout.

Replying to the motion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi assured the people of Manipur that the Centre and the state governments were working together to restore peace in the violence-hit state and asserted that those responsible for heinous crimes against women will not be spared. "The Northeast is a piece of our heart... The problems of Manipur are being presented in such a manner as if they had begun in the recent past," Modi said.

"I would like to assure all the citizens that peace will prevail in Manipur soon. I would like to assure the people of Manipur, especially women, that the country is with you. Parliament is with you," said Modi just after the Opposition staged a walkout midway through the speech as Manipur didn't figure in it till then. The mention of Manipur came after an hour and 40 minutes of the address.

In the speech that lasted around two hours and 20 minutes, the PM kept his focus on attacking Congress, the failures of UPA governments and the Opposition bloc INDIA. In a no-holds-barred attack on the Congress, Modi held the grand old party and its politics responsible for the problems of the Northeast. He recalled incidents like the use of the Air Force to attack the people in Mizoram, to point at the Congress "neglect" of the region.

As for the no-trust motion, he recalled having said in 2018 that "it was not a floor test for us but for them." Modi added that in 2028, when the Opposition moves another no-confidence motion, India would have become the third largest economy in the world.

In a stinging attack against the INDIA bloc, he said changing their name will not change their fortunes. "This is a *ghamandia* (arrogant) alliance. The first I in I.N.D.I.A stands for the arrogance of parties and the other I for one family's arrogance," he charged. The Opposition, he said, is all about *loot ki dukan* (loot shop) and *nafrat ka bazaar* (hate bazaar), in what was seen as a swipe at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's frequent pitch on *mohabbat ki dukan* (love shop).

ADHIR SUSPENDED FROM LOK SABHA

Just after the government won the no-confidence motion, Leader of the Opposition Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury was suspended from the Lok Sabha for alleged repeat misconduct. The matter will be investigated by the privileges committee. A resolution for his suspension was moved after his remarks against the PM triggered an outrage from the treasury benches. It was passed by a voice vote | **P11**

A NEW LOW, SAYS DEVE GOWDA

Former prime minister and JDS supremo HD Deve Gowda on Thursday expressed displeasure over noisy scenes during the debate on no-confidence motion in the Lok Sabha. "Despite my ill-health, I went to the Lok Sabha. I am disappointed with the happenings there. From my long experience, I say this is a new low," Gowda tweeted. The former PM said democracy can be saved only if everybody maintains dignity.

K'taka HC stays ₹50L cost on X Corp subject to ₹25L deposit

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE Karnataka High Court on Thursday stayed the single judge's order imposing an exemplary cost of Rs 50 lakh on X Corp (formerly Twitter) while dismissing its petition against multiple blocking orders issued by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, subject to depositing Rs 25 lakh cost in the court within a week. The stay does not apply to the dismissal of X Corp's petition.

The single judge bench dismissed Twitter's petition on June 30, 2023, and imposed an exemplary cost of Rs 50 lakh. It was made payable to Karnataka State Legal Services Authority within 45 days from that day, with any delay attracting an additional levy of Rs 5,000 per day. Hearing the X Corp's appeal mainly on the cost imposed, a division bench of Chief Justice Prasanna B Varale and Justice MGS Kamal passed the interim order staying the cost imposed by the single judge bench, but subject to a deposit of Rs 25 lakh in the court until the next hearing. **P4**

Bill in Rajya Sabha to axe CJI from 3-member panel that picks CEC

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

THE Centre on Thursday tabled a controversial bill in Rajya Sabha that seeks to replace the Chief Justice of India (CJI) with a Union cabinet minister in the three-member panel that picks the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners.

Currently, the panel comprises the prime minister, the leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the CJI. Under the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill, 2023, a Union cabinet minister nominated by the prime minister will join the panel in place of the CJI, giving the government more power over the appointment of top election officials.

The bill comes months after the Supreme Court in March ruled that the selection panel should comprise the prime minister, the leader of the opposition and the Chief Justice of India, till a law is framed by Parliament for the appointment of top Election Commission officials.

Current Chief Election Commissioner Anup Chandra Pandey is to demit office in February 2024, months ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

The Bill was moved in the Upper House by Union law minister Arjun Ram Meghwal amid an Opposition uproar.

Criticising the bill, Aam Admi Party leader and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said since the proposed panel will have two BJP members and one from the Congress, whichever EC is selected will be loyal to the ruling party.

Congress general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal called it a "blatant attempt at making the Election Commission a total puppet in the hands of the prime minister". Noted lawyer Prashant Bhushan said even if the bill is passed by Parliament, it would be "unconstitutional".

EXPRESS READ

Pakistan's National Assembly dissolved

Islamabad: Pakistan President Arif Alvi dissolved the National Assembly three days ahead of its mandated period, following which outgoing PM Shehbaz Sharif spoke to Leader of Opposition on Thursday over the nomination for a caretaker premier to conduct the general elections this year. **P14**

EXPRESS INTAKE

Karnataka cabinet approves cyber security policy | **P4**

CPM rejects 'quota' allegations against Pinarayi's daughter | **P7**

B'luru women set up mental health camps to aid Manipur | **P7**